

**HARRIS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
BUDGET WORK SESSION I**

May 7, 2024
4:30 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Rob Grant, Susan Andrews, Bobby Irions, Greg Gantt, Scott Lightsey. Staff Present: Randy Dowling, County Manager; Elizabeth Barfield, Chief Financial Officer; Andrea Dzioba, County Clerk.

CALL TO ORDER. Chairman Grant called the meeting to order and said the purpose was for the discussion of the proposed budget for FY 2024/2025. He asked Randy Dowling, County Manager, to review same.

Overview. Mr. Dowling said he is presenting the proposed recommended budget for FY 24/25; that it is on the County's website; that this evening he will provide an overview; that the budget has had an increase from \$57 million to about \$69 million this fiscal year due to capital projects; that he has received input from Department Heads and Elected Officials; that the 2024 digest is expected to increase due to sales; that from 2018 to 2022 that the reserve has increased from \$7 million to \$22 million; that the millage rate has remained the same; that this budget includes a 3% COLA and 1% longevity; and that the budget does not contain a millage rate increase and assumes the millage rate will not be rolled back. Mr. Dowling reviewed each of the departments in the General Fund and advised that the proposed budget has been available on the County website since yesterday morning. He presented information included in the proposed budget related to Special Revenue Funds which includes the ARP Act Grant Fund, Confiscated Assets Fund, County Jail Fund, County Law Library Fund, Drug Abuse Treatment & Education Fund, Emergency Telephone System Fund, Hotel/Motel Tax Fund, and the Local Victim Assistance Program Fund; reviewed the Capital Project Funds which includes the Public Improvements Authority Fund, TSPLOST 2013, SPLOST 2019, TSPLOST 2023, and SPLOST 2025; and that the Enterprise Funds includes the Airport Fund, Solid Waste Fund, and Water Works Fund (Water Department and Waste Water Department).

Mr. Dowling responded to questions from the Board regarding various items as he reviewed each of the funds included in the proposed budget including that the proposed airport projects are dependant on outside funding; that Water Works fee schedule includes a water rate increase in accordance with the rate study; that the \$200, 000 in wastewater is related to sewer tap fees and payments to Columbus to treat sewage; that population growth estimates may not be as much as believed according to the Governor's office predictions; that Harris County is growing but growing slowly; and provided a review of the fee schedule information provided in the proposed budget. He advised that department heads will be present at subsequent meetings and may wish to make specific comments regarding their proposed budgets and the items that were requested but cut from the proposed budget.

NEXT BUDGET WORK SESSIONS. Scheduled for 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 14th, Tuesday, May 21st, and Tuesday, May 28th.

BUDGET PUBLIC HEARINGS. First Public Hearing will be held during the June 4, 2024 Regular Session, and the second will be held during the June 18, 2024 Regular Session, with adoption by resolution to follow.

ADJOURNMENT. The work session was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.